

# Plans for a new community care facility to open next year

by Patricia Roy

COMMUNITY CARE

**S**helley and **Barrie MacEwen**, owners of **MacEwen Mews** in Margate, expect a future trend toward the development of larger community care facilities, and they are responding to that trend. They plan to build a new 50- to 60-bed facility in Kensington. Steps are being taken to have this new home licensed for both community and nursing home care. Construction will start in the spring, and the facility is projected to open in the early fall of 2009.



Shelley MacEwen, co-owner of MacEwen Mews in Margate, is in the process of putting together plans to build a new 50- to 60-bed community care facility in Kensington in the spring. Shelley believes that as the population ages, the need will continue to increase for the type of facility she and her husband Barrie have in mind.

Shelley has been a Registered Nurse for 31 years, and has a **Bachelor of Nursing degree**. She and her husband opened MacEwen Mews in 1998 with four rooms. The next year, they expanded to add eight more rooms and were then licensed for 20 residents.

“In the years since, we’ve met many challenges operating a smaller facility,” says Shelley. “People seem to be attracted to the larger facilities which are centrally located in their community. Some of the smaller facilities are closing. While we have enjoyed the intimacy of this facility, we had to think about how to stay viable in this business. We chose an urban setting for our new planned facility. Although it will be centrally located in Kensington, it will serve a greater need and will include the many surrounding communities.”

## Staff

“I employ five people for the ten residents we currently have. I also work here full-time as a caregiver and I manage this facility as well. The number of caregiver employees is a license requirement, and depends on the number of residents staying in the home and the level of care they need.

“We hope that the future facility will be able to accommodate the five levels of care. Level one to three is for people who require supervision and/or assistance in a structured environment. Level four and five is classified as nursing home care.”

## Training for community care workers

“Currently, the only training required to work in a community care facility is **CPR** and standard **First Aid** certificates,” Shelley says. “I have worked in geriatrics for over 20 years and I believe structured, in-house education programs are needed.

“Many caregivers can not afford to take time away from paid work to take formal training. I have been able to train my staff to the level they require. But there is a growing need for training to deal with the increasing number of people who are cognitively impaired and those with special needs. It is important that staff are encouraged to attend educational sessions provided by government. These seminars are on topics such as infection control, food preparation, and other work-related topics.”

## Future staffing needs

“It is likely that the present home will close once the new facility opens. We will need about 25 to 30 workers to fill positions such as **caregivers**, **housekeeping**, **kitchen staff**, and **administration**. We will need an **activity director** and probably a **maintenance person** as well. We will likely start the hiring process in June 2009.”

For more information, call **Shelley MacEwen** at **836-5599**.



# Enjoying a satisfying work life after taking a chance at a new career

by Heidi Riley

JOB HUNT

**R**oseanne Shepard grew up in Cardigan, and was one of nine children. She left school at age 17 to work at a commercial laundry, but she always wanted to continue with her education.



Roseanne Shepard worked at the same job for 27 years before making a career change. She is now a caregiver at a community care facility in Stratford, and loves her job.

“I enjoyed my job, but in the back of my mind, I was starting to think about becoming a caregiver,” says Roseanne. “When my parents got sick, I helped take care of them. I really enjoyed being part of the teamwork of my family and the professionals who took care of them.”

## The first steps towards making a career change

In 2000, she began to upgrade her education at **Adult Education** in Charlottetown. Roseanne, a single mother, worked full-time while she was going to school. “I learned a lot, and I decided I wanted to change my career.”

Four years ago, she spoke to a career counsellor at **PEI Career Development Services**. She was given an assessment to determine her interests and strengths. “The assessment showed that I was ready for a career change,” says Roseanne.

## Taking the next step

“Two years later, I saw ads in the paper saying that a community care facility, **Andrews of Stratford**, was accepting more residents, and I had no doubt that they could be looking for more staff as well.”

Roseanne applied for a job, and was soon asked to join the staff as a caregiver. “I really enjoy the teamwork aspect of the job,” says Roseanne. “We help each other get the work done. I enjoy the residents, and I learn a lot from them and from their families. I also learn a lot from the other caregivers, LPNs and RNs who work there. It is a fantastic, caring community of people working together.”

## Duties on the job

“Most of the residents are quite independent, but I do help them with personal care, I assist them to walk to the dining room, and I’m there for companionship as well. The work is quite flexible, and there is lots of variety. It’s very rewarding, and I feel needed on the job.”

## Making a career change

“There is nothing to fear from trying something new,” says Roseanne. “If I can make a career change after working in the same place for 27 years, so can anyone else. I always knew there would be a time in my life that I was going to take the big leap.”

## Future plans

Roseanne says she would like to go back to school again some day. “I regret dropping out of school, and I know now that the more I learn, the more doors will open for me. I love to read, and I enjoy learning. I’m very close to earning my GED, and when the time is right, I will go back to school.”

“The LPNs I work with have encouraged me to go back to school. I have watched LPNs on the job, and I know what the job is like. I’m not done yet with changing careers, and I could make another change in the future. Perhaps some day I will study to become an LPN.”